CAMPAIGN AGAINST
carf
RACISM & FASCISM

No 21 July/August 1994 80p

In the shadow of the Right

UNITED EUROPE UNITED FASCISM

★ 'Post-fascist' con trick

★ Tories, welfare and the New Right

PLUS: SHEFFIELD SELF-DEFENCE • CAMPSFIELD UPRISING

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EDITORIAL

There are no short cuts in the fight against racism. When anti-racist organisations first put forward the idea of a Racial Harassment Bill, CARF argued against making racial harassment subject to special laws on the basis that there were already enough laws which could deal with racial violence, the point was that the police were not enforcing them. A specific offence of racial harassment, besides, would require an additional burden of proof (that of racial intent) and thereby afford the police further excuse for their failure to act. And it was this unwillingness to take action against racism, CARF argued, which had to be tackled again and again and again.

What home secretary Michael Howard has done, however, is not to look at the failure of the criminal justice system to prosecute the law with the utmost force – because that would be to examine the way that racism has become structured into the whole system, from the courts to the police – but to tag on one small special harassment clause to the Criminal Justice Bill. The new offence of 'causing intentional harassment or distress' to deal with the 'cumulative harm caused by deliberate harassment against a person or their family' will in no way further the fight against racism.

Given the police's tendency to treat racial harassment as inter-ethnic neighbourhood disputes, the new clause, if applied at all, is likely to be used against black people fighting back against racial harassment rather than against the perpetrators of such harassment. And as the new offence makes it necessary for the police to gather even more evidence against the offender than before, the more likely scenario is that fewer prosecutions than ever will be brought and the same old hoary arguments will prevail: 'the victim would not come forward'; 'there weren't enough witnesses'; 'we couldn't gather enough hard evidence'. And, in the final analysis, the police can always pass the buck: 'we passed the evidence on to the CPS, it's up to them to prosecute'.

The futility of creating a new catch-all harassment offence was further illustrated in June at Southwark Crown Court when Judge Christopher Hardy sentenced BNP deputy leader Richard Edmonds to just three months' imprisonment for his part in a vicious attack on a black man which left him scarred for life after a beer glass was thrust in his face. In sentencing Edmonds, Judge Hardy overlooked the racism of the BNP, concentrating instead on the violence of political parties from both the extreme Left and extreme Right. 'When people associate themselves with extreme organisations, whether on the right or the left, as officials they are to a certain extent riding a tiger.' It is 'a dangerous animal and when it is loose in the streets you must restrain it and not goad it', said Hardy, who had previously sentenced BNP footsoldiers Stephen O'Shea and Simon Biggs to heavier sentences for their part in this vicious attack. As Edmonds had previously served time in custody awaiting trial, his three-month sentence meant he could walk free to resume the BNP's race-hate campaign. Punish the monkey to spare the organ-grinder?

Before writing Judge Hardy off as a maverick, we should recall that his comments are depressingly in tune with a climate in which neo-nazi parties and fascist ideas are openly tolerated by governments across Europe. When foreign secretary Douglas Hurd tells us that there is nothing wrong with doing business with Italian fascists, when the Italian president announces that no-one born after 1945 can be defined as a fascist, when German Conservative historians attempt to take the far Right out of the 'shadow of Auschwitz' (see p8), then it is time to admit that right-wing ideas are in the ascendancy. And in that ascendancy, the New Right argument – that there is no such thing as institutionalised racism, and that those who seek to legislate against inequality are against freedom, are totalitarian, and constitute the real fascist 'thought police' – is central and forms part of the common sense anti-anti-racism that is being used to demonise the anti-racist movement. In such a climate, anti-racists need to make doubly sure that our tactics and strategies do not personalise racism by focusing on attitudes and prejudices but are directed firmly instead against racist behaviour and actions on the one hand and institutionalised and structured racism on the other.

Defending Darnall

Not since the days of the Bradford 12 in the early eighties have Asian youths in Yorkshire felt so inspired to fight back against racist attacks and police harassment. CARF focuses on the Darnall defence campaign.

As we go to press, three youths from Darnall, Sheffield, are standing trial for offences arising out of incidents that began on what should have been a peaceful Bank Holiday Monday.

Darnall, a close-knit, predominantly Asian community in the East End of Sheffield, has seen more than its fair share of racial violence in recent months, particularly since the development of a local 'Rights for Whites' campaign around housing (see *CARF* no 15). When a group of over 20 white men, who had been drinking heavily in a nearby pub, descended on the area on 4 May, wielding bars and baseball bats and threatening young children playing on the streets and elderly passers-by, Asian youth decided enough was enough. Within minutes, Darnall Asians were out on the streets and had driven the racists back.

Police priorities

By this time the police had arrived on the scene. At first it seemed as if they were going to arrest the white men. But, unbelievably, the police just put them into a van, drove them around the corner and let them go. When the son of a ward councillor, Kashiff Walyatt, who had been attacked by the white gang and had had the front windscreen of his car smashed, tried to explain what had happened, he was arrested for his troubles.

This, however, was only the beginning of incidents that were set to escalate and throw into sharp forcus the racist priorities of Sheffield's police. When rumours of a possible BNP public meeting to be held at the notorious 'Sportsman' pub began to circulate, Asian youth quickly gathered on the streets to plan the defence of the community. But whereas the police were nowhere to be seen when racists descended on Darnall, the response to a spontaneous public meeting of Asian youth on the street was to descend on the area in riot vans. Six Asian youths, together with two white anti-racists, aged from 13 to 27, were arrested, as scuffles broke out. Many of the older Asian youths were arrested for attempting to stop police intimidating, bullying and racially abusing young children. Nissar Jaffar, one of the defendants and now chair of the defence campaign, told CARF: 'I couldn't believe it. I was there in the area, saw what was happening and tried to calm the situation down. I was driving in my car, to the mosque. The police followed me into the mosque car park and violently arrested and abused me.'

Defence campaign launched

On 7 May, over 500 people from all sections of the community attended a packed meeting at the Pakistan Muslim Centre, to demand an end to police harassment, the dropping of the charges against the eight, and an independent inquiry into Attercliffe police station. The Superintendent at Attercliffe was given a chance to speak but, unable to handle the anger and respond to the questions raised by members of the public, he left.

Whereas the Sheffield Asian youth movement of the 1980s, which drew its inspiration from the Bradford 12, was mainly student-based, the organisers of the Darnall defence campaign are today drawn from the youth experience on the streets. Many younger Asians are being excluded from Sheffield schools (see p7) and those who have left school are being forced into jobs like cabbing, with its high risk of racial violence. But the main focus for community anger today is the police. 'As far as the police are concerned all Asian people are criminals', says Nissar Jaffar.

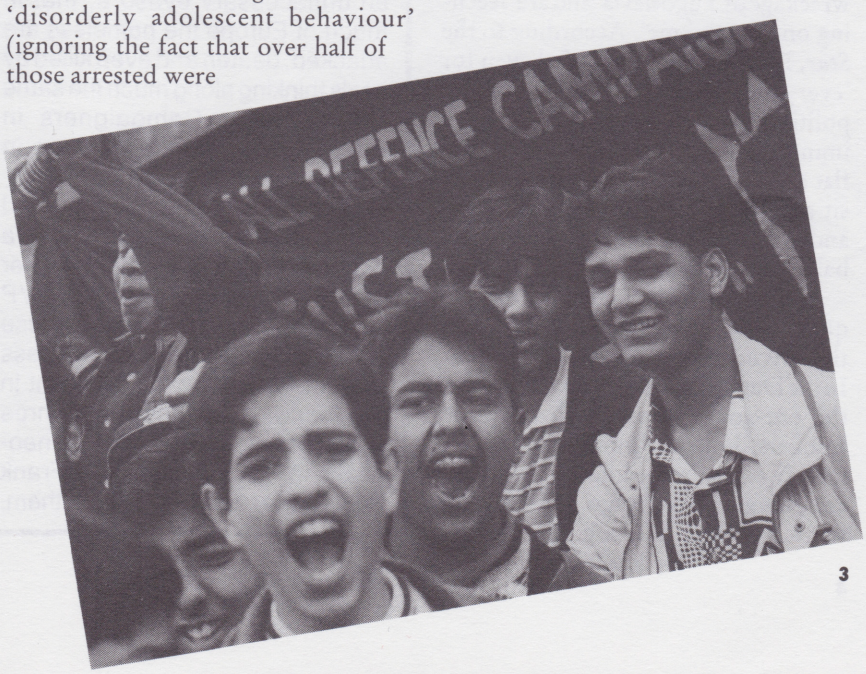
The police's initial response to the arrest of the Asian youths was to claim that it was nothing more than 'disorderly adolescent behaviour' (ignoring the fact that over half of those arrested were over 25). But as the Darnall defence campaign became more vociferous, the police, backed by the local media, intensified their condemnation of 'violent Asian youth'. Most disturbingly, they were to imply that Asians were the source of poor 'race relations' in the area – a view that can only serve to reinforce the populist 'Rights for Whites' campaigns.

Criminalisation of Asian youth

When the Darnall defence campaign announced a picket to be held at Attercliffe police station on 6 May, the police responded by claiming that it would be violent. Stories of police contingency plans to deal with Asian youths – the main instigators of disorderly incidents – also appeared in local papers. Nevertheless, 800 demonstrators were not to be deterred and the picket passed off angrily but peacefully. It was followed by a 300-strong picket on 1 June, when the youth faced their first court hearing. The breach of the peace charge was withdrawn against Nissar Jaffar and the police were ordered to pay costs of £200. Charges against the others were reduced. And subsequently, charges against five of the others were dropped altogether.

The Darnall defence campaign has succeeded in obtaining the support of the City Council and the local trades council. Nissar Jaffar told CARF: 'We've started now and we're going to be a thorn in the police's side until justice is done. No justice no peace.' ■

Darnall defence campaign on 0374 232361.



In the shadow

A popular racism built on the stereotype of the 'Euroscrounger' is being engendered by the New Right and used to justify both the exploitation of black people and the writing off of the poor. CARF analyses the economic basis and ideological underpinnings for the new Tory rhetoric.

Europe is developing a dangerous new mental illness. It's called 'Scroungerphobia' – and the UK is experiencing the worst outbreak of all. Several Conservative politicians have been infected with the psychosis, most notably social security secretary Peter Lilley, obsessed with single mothers and foreign scroungers 'milking our benefits'. The darling of the New Right, Michael Portillo, has also shown signs of grave mental disturbance.

Scroungerphobia

But 'Scroungerphobia' is spreading rapidly across the nation via the popular press – and those who are picked out for abuse by the scroungerphobiacs are often immigrants, refugees, the homeless, single mothers. After the killing of Joy Gardner, the tabloids picked up Tory MP Teresa Gorman's scrounger-theme: 'She had been bumming on the social services for five years ... she had cost taxpayers an enormous amount.' And even before John Major's scroungerphobic attack against the homeless, the *Daily Star* (3.5.94) had warned of a 'new breed of beggar roaming the streets of Britain, "Yugo-leeches" who come from the wreckage of Yugoslavia' and are 'leeching on you and me'. According to the *Star*, Britain provides a safe haven for 'every bug-ridden waif and hate-filled political stray'. Once they come, they immediately get a council house, nice flat and state benefits 'so that they can sit around and have their teeth fixed and new glasses and the occasional baby on you and me'.

Unfortunately, the failure to quarantine scroungerphobia means that it is now spreading across Europe. In the Dutch general election campaign, the out-going prime minister, Ruud Lubbers, declared: 'Immigrants cannot merely expect to be looked after, they are going to have to go and look for work.' Roman Herzog, the newly-inaugurated German president, has spoken of the problems of a 'cramped Germany' and advised foreigners who do not wish to take up German citizenship to return home. In Austria, where a private police force has been contracted to drive the homeless out of parks, the Christian Democrats and anti-immigrant Freedom Party are joining ranks to demand a new anti-vagrancy law whereby the homeless could be punished for endangering the success of the tourist industry. In the UK, in the run-up to the European elections, home secretary Michael Howard launched a vicious attack against Labour immigration policies which, he said, would allow eight million foreign workers to enter the UK and gain access to the welfare state.

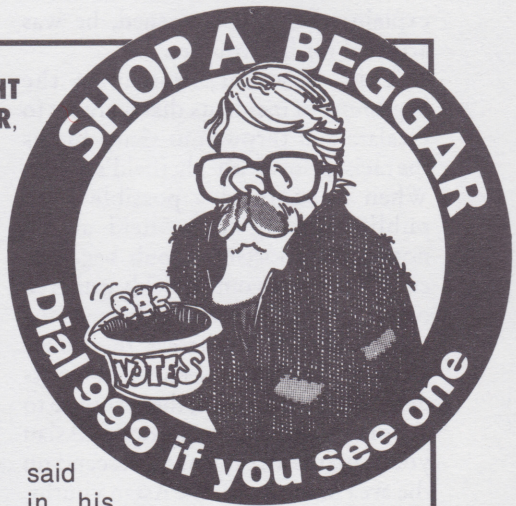
Behind the new stereotype

Underpinning the rantings of the press and politicians are profound social and economic changes taking place across Europe. With the insecurities that have come about through European harmonisation and the Maastricht treaty, has come a new xenophobic archetype – that of the 'Euro-scrounger', which can embrace an 'economic migrant' from the Third World or eastern Europe, or an 'unemployable layabout' moving across western Europe in search of the most generous social provision, at one and the same time.

And the stereotype of the 'Euro-scrounger' speaks to white European fears at a time when the welfare state is contracting, unemployment increasing and crime and other social problems inevitably on the rise.

Furthermore, the integration of Europe into one common market means that the pressures for competitive advantage, both within Europe and internationally, make cutting back on the welfare state and public spending an attractive option. As expenditure on the welfare state declines – and the

PERHAPS IT SHOULD BE BROUGHT TO THE ATTENTION OF JOHN MAJOR, who recently attacked beggars as an unnecessary eyesore, that in much of Europe the homeless are attacked, beaten and even killed by nazis thinking along much the same lines as him. Campaigners in Austria point to the murder in February in Innsbruck of a homeless man who was beaten around the head by two neo-nazis with a plank of wood. It happened after politicians from the ruling OVP called for arrest and the workhouse for beggars. In Italy a homeless man was killed by the far Right in 1992, and in Germany at least three homeless men were killed by neo-nazis in 1992 and 1993. Frank Bonish, the murderer of one of them, said in his defence in court: 'I wanted Germany to be orderly and clean.' Where is the logic, when politicians like Major set up the targets for attack – and then dare to denounce far-Right violence when it occurs.



of the New Right

UK has the worst record of all – more and more people are finding it difficult to gain access to social benefits.

Dismantling the welfare state

It is no accident,therefore, that a New Right ideology that blames poverty and disadvantage on the culture of the

poor should arise at the same time as the withdrawal of welfare rights.

Despite public spending cuts, the ideological attack and the introduction of market principles into the running of the welfare state were a fairly late development in Thatcherite policies. New Right influences from monetarists like Milton Friedman and neo-liberal guru Frederick Hayek were most noticeable in the economy and Tory attacks on trade unions. The welfare state was left more or less intact until 1988, when the Education Reform Act, the Housing Act and the Housing and Local Government Act were brought in and a comprehensive review of the National Health Service and the personal social services was inaugurated.

It was Conservative think-tanks which led the way for the extension of market principles into the welfare state. In 1980 the Institute of Economic Affairs (IEA) set up the Social Affairs Unit, which criticised Thatcher for failing to make cuts in welfare spending. The Adam Smith Institute pioneered arguments for privatising the NHS.

New Right welfare dependency theorists

These think tanks have also brought New Right ideas from the United States to the welfare debate in the UK. Two sets of ideas have been particularly influential. First, they borrowed from the 'cultures of poverty' and 'welfare underclass' theories of Charles Murray. Among some groups, Murray argued, welfare provisions actually create the problems they are supposed to alleviate. In the IEA publication 'The Emerging British Underclass', guest-writer Murray turned his attention to the UK and argued that the process whereby single mothers and the young homeless become dependent on welfare, as a direct consequence of the reduction in both the social stigma and financial penalties which were formerly associated with these conditions, is being replicated in the UK, fuelled by higher benefits and the Homeless Persons Act.

The second influence has come from the US 'New Consensus on Family and Welfare', a group of 20 academics and practitioners which sought to arrive at a 'consensus' on the future direction of welfare policy in the US. In May 1990, the IEA organised a seminar to discuss the 'New Consensus'. There, New Right theorists argued that poverty springs from the behaviour of the poor themselves. In order to avoid the 'behavioural dependency' which creates a 'welfare underclass', benefits must be reformed so as to reinforce personal responsibility.

Creating the under-class?

But the New Right's offensive against the welfare state cannot be separated from the flexible labour requirements of European governments as the nature of employment changes – and European governments increasingly turn towards monetarist solutions to economic problems brought about by rapid restructuring. By creating a 13th state of 16 million non-citizens, immigrants, migrants and refugees, who are not cushioned by any social safety net, European governments are ensuring that those workers are forced into the low-paid, hazardous, shit jobs in the service sector that white Europeans, less inclined to move and more demanding in terms of jobs and benefits, are not prepared to do. If an article by Ann Robinson of the Institute of Directors (*Guardian* 27.5.94) is anything to go by, UK employers believe they have come to saturation point in terms of working-class 'immigrant' labour. Robinson makes a distinction between 'active' and

'passive' immigrants and argues, in support of Major's announcement that immigrants who are prepared to invest £750,000 in the UK will be given special entry rules, that we need a new class of entrepreneurial immigrant who can create jobs 'specifically for other immigrants who now form a significant

proportion of the UK's pool of unemployed'.

What the Institute of Directors seems to have in mind are more Victorian sweatshops, with ethnic entrepreneurs exploiting an ethnically and racially-stratified workforce (see *CARF* no 20). Whereas the EC wants a common social chapter to prevent 'social dumping' (investment in countries with cheap labour costs), the UK, by refusing to sign the social chapter, is undercutting the rest of Europe. Ann Robinson again: 'Inward investment has been one of the recent great successes of the British economy. We attract more than all the rest of the European Community put together. Most of this comes from big corporations, but it's smaller enterprises which are the best hope for the future.' Cheap 'ethnic' labour, the Institute of Directors is well aware, is central to the UK's economic future. In the 1980s, the Institute of Directors was at the forefront of the campaign to abolish the wages councils on the grounds that a minimum wage 'discourages employers from taking on blacks, who for a number of socio-economic reasons have a lower marginal productivity than whites'.

Freedom to discriminate

If the UK is to continue with this economic strategy, it must ensure that black and migrant labour stays where it is – confined by 'structured racism' to the bottom of society.

And here New Right ideology comes to the aid of the economists. For it holds that inequality is essential if the market is to operate freely and without constraint. Therefore, New Right thinkers oppose any attempt to work against discrimination, legally or socially.

According to New Right thinking, as we are already equally free to compete, those that fail to succeed do so out of their innate incapacities. And the New Right is helped in its attempt to hold back anti-racism by the Tory press's derision of race laws as a form of totalitarian mind police. (Witness the barrage against the CRE's recent successful complainant – Irishman Trevor McAuley.)

For the New Right, even our weak and largely ineffectual race laws go too far. The freedom to discriminate, the freedom to be racist, the freedom, that is, which accords with the freedom of the market, is, they argue, the first freedom. Such extreme right-wing ideas are not marginal ones, but are at the forefront of much of Tory policy; they are shaping popular racism, giving a fillip to the 'Rights for Whites' message of the BNP, and making the fight against racial harassment all the more fraught. ■

Additional information taken from various publications of the Child Poverty Action Group, 1-5 Bath Street, London EC1V 9PY.

BIFU

THE BANKING INSURANCE AND FINANCE UNION (BIFU) IS SUPPORTING BLACK STAFF AT BARCLAYS BANKS WHO HAVE BEEN UNFAIRLY TARGETED FOR REDUNDANCY. According to BIFU, black workers at Barclays have a 60-70 per cent greater chance than white staff of being selected for redundancy. In the London central region a quarter of all black staff have been selected, even though they represent just 13.5 per cent of all employers. CARF believes that what is happening at Barclays is not an isolated incident. In job losses of over a million in the last 12 months, all the evidence points to racial discrimination. The unemployment gap between whites and blacks has been widening throughout the 1980s and '90s and black people are now seven times more likely to lose their jobs than whites. And all this is creating a situation whereby black people are forced out of the 'core' jobs into unemployment or low-paid, part-time employment. *And then they dare speak of a 'black underclass'*!

Further information from BIFU, Sheffield House, 1b Amity Grove, Raynes Park, London SW20 0LG. Tel: 081-946 9151.

Standing up to racist laws

In a variety of ways, black people are being excluded from welfare benefits. But opposition to racist legislation is growing.

The Committee for Non-Racist Benefits, an umbrella group of 160 welfare and advice groups, has launched a campaign against controversial new government proposals to stop benefits to black people if they temporarily leave the country for a holiday or to visit sick relatives back in their country of origin.

Under the Department of Social Security's proposed new Habitual Residence Test, which has been masterminded by social security secretary Peter Lilley, all claimants will be asked a series of questions by DSS officials, including 'Where is your centre of interest?' and 'Why did you come to the UK?'

Lilley has already run into difficulties with his scheme. The government's social security advisory committee has said that the scheme should not go ahead unless a series of safeguards is introduced.

Meanwhile, the Hackney branch of the local government union Unison is leading the way in opposing passport checks by boycotting the government's legislation on 'Persons from Abroad'. Under the legislation, housing benefit workers are obliged to check the immigration status of all benefit claimants not already on income support.

According to Hackney branch press officer Tony Whelan, this means checking their passports and liaising with the Home Office about their cases. 'The benefits workers who have to implement the legislation are determined not to work as immigration officers for a racist system. They believe that the new legislation *can* be beaten, if enough people take a stand against it.' ■

Committee for Non-Racist Benefits, c/o Greenwich WRU. Tel 081-854 8888 ext 8222; Hackney Unison, Number 1 Branch, 219 Mare Street, London E8 3QH. Tel 081-985 7134.

Excluded from school

Black people are not only being excluded from welfare. Every child has the right, in law, to education. Yet, each year, around 66,000 children are denied that right.

Education is supposed to be the great leveller in society, the way those born out of privilege can 'pull themselves up by their bootstraps'. Yet those denied education come from the poorest families who live in areas of highest unemployment and overcrowding. And children in black families are at least four times more likely to find themselves legally kept from schooling.

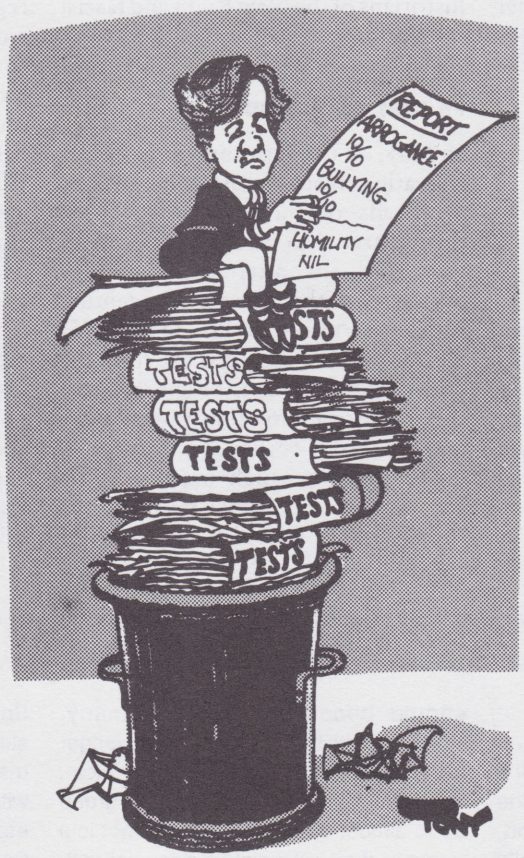
Visible and vulnerable

One of the authors of a new report on black exclusions, *Outcast England*, explained the process to CARF: 'Schools are becoming very authoritarian towards black pupils who can get excluded for infringing superficial school rules because they wear a beard or a particular "black-style" haircut. Black children are being singled out because they appear not to conform. And there is a high premium on fitting the school image now that school finances depend on the number of children on the roll. The black child is always very visible and therefore vulnerable. And there is downright racism at work here too. Schools are playing up to those parents who associate a large black pupil population with a bad school and trying to change the complexion of the school by getting rid of black pupils. The idea that white middle-class schools are "better" schools is deeply entrenched.'

Racism ignored

Black children are frequently excluded after a school fight between a black and a white pupil. A racist remark may have triggered an incident but this is ignored and the black child treated as the aggressor. Black children are also seen as aggressive and impertinent in the classroom – particularly when they question the fairness of a teacher's decision. And if a group of black children oppose a teacher, they can find themselves described as 'disruptive' and 'uncontrollable'. The equation of 'black' with 'problem' is back with a vengeance in the classroom. And now that there is far less interest in, or monitoring of anti-racism in schools, teachers' prejudices of all kinds are re-emerging.

Latest figures for Birmingham, where 9% of school pupils are black, show that 34% of permanently excluded children are black; in Wolverhampton, where 6% of pupils are black, 12% of those excluded are black. In London boroughs, the figures are even higher: 61% of exclusions of primary-age children in Lewisham in 1990-91 were black, 33% of exclusions in Southwark were black, in Brent the latest figures suggest 85% of exclusions were of black children.



Blaming the victim

The astronomically high number of exclusions of black children is borne out, but not explained by the government. (The Department for Education's figures state that African-Caribbean children, who make up 2% of the total school population, account for 8.1% of exclusions.) Instead of trying to eradicate the racist practices which underlie the clear discrimination against black children, the fashion is to find the cause of exclusions in black behaviour, which is itself perceived as a product of 'black' culture and child-rearing. Of course, it is not the black family that causes black exclusion. But it is likely that those black parents who were themselves failed by the same racist educational system are least well placed to access education for their children, especially when it means appealing against an exclusion within a bureaucratic system which is alien and alienating.

Outcast England puts the blame for black exclusions squarely on the government's package of educational 'reforms' which transformed the educational system from a child-oriented to a market-oriented one. Schools are picking those children they feel, or think parents will feel, give a school status. Teachers, who have the added burdens of the national curriculum and testing, are far nearer breaking point. They use the threat of exclusions because there is less time for pastoral care and less money being spent on buying in specialist support care for difficult children. Finally, local authority control over schools' anti-racist practices has been eroded. Teacher prejudices seeing blacks as 'under-achievers' or 'problems' are resurfacing in the classroom. Instead of finding themselves in ESN (educationally subnormal) schools, as happened 15 years ago, black children are just being forced out of school.

The fightback has started. In many parts of England black families are struggling against the racist decisions which have excluded their children. But only a concerted nationwide campaign can really begin to reverse this alarming national trend. ■

Outcast England: how schools exclude black children is available from the Institute of Race Relations, price £3.00.

'Post-fascism'

CARF examines how far-Right intellectuals in Germany and Italy are using the media to put across their message.

Oscar Scalfaro, president of Italy, has said that by definition no one born after 1945 can possibly be considered a fascist. His comments will be music to the ears of Gianfranco Fini, the leader of the National Alliance, who in the same breath as declaring Mussolini the greatest statesman Italy has ever seen, defines himself and the MSI (the largest component in the National Alliance) as a 'post-fascist' party.

Rewriting history

Scalfaro's tacit endorsement of Fini's great lie is all the more worrying in that it is just part of a new intellectual orthodoxy, growing up in Germany and Italy, that seeks to reinterpret the history of the Second World War from the vantage-point of our so-called 'post-fascist', 'post-communist', 'post-modern' world, at the same time as minimising the crimes of the nazi period, particularly the Holocaust. It is an orthodoxy that has been shaped, since the 1980s, by conservative historians of the New Right and fascist intellectuals.

Fascist media pundits

In Italy, on the 49th anniversary of its liberation from fascist dictatorship, hundreds of thousands of people demonstrated to defend the constitution and the anti-fascist values associated with it. On the intervention of an embarrassed Berlusconi, the MSI withdrew a bill designed to repeal the constitutional provision prohibiting the reconstruction of the fascist party and the return of the royal family.

But, despite such mass support for the values of anti-fascism, the media (much of which is owned by Berlusconi) is going out of its way to rehabilitate Mussolini, denigrate the anti-fascist cause and popularise fascism. Key MSI intellectuals are either regularly quoted or have access to the national press. Domenico Fisichella, for instance, a dyed-in-the-wool monarchist, and lecturer in political philosophy at La Sapienza University, has a regular column in the Rome daily *Il Tempo*. The Northern League has its key theorists too. Gianfranco Miglio, another professor of political science and, judging by recent outbursts, a student of the Hitler school of thought, is forever quoted on TV. 'Our civilisation needs to push its frontiers eastwards', says Miglio, so that eastern borders are 'determined ... by the ability of the Germans to organise the Slav areas and colonise the East.' At last liberated from Communism, the east European countries will 'become

EURO-PARLIAMENT: THE STATE OF PLAY

Glyn Ford MEP writes:

It is clear from the 1994 European elections that the extreme Right is still a force to be reckoned with. In Belgium the fascist Vlaams Blok doubled its support, returning two MEPs to Strasbourg, while the Front National will return one. In France the Front National saw its support falter slightly, but it has still managed to return ten MEPs. In Italy, Berlusconi's Forza Italia swept the board with 28 MEPs in all. The neo-fascist Alleanza Nazionale gained 12 per cent of the vote and 11 seats, while the Lega Nord now has six MEPs. In Germany the Republikaner were wiped from the electoral board.

How will the forces of the extreme Right line up in the new parliament? Silvio Berlusconi's Forza Italia, it is now clear, will form a group on its own and will not join either the European People's Party (EPP) or the Liberal Democratic Reformist Group. The Lega Nord and the Alleanza Nazionale may well rejoin the Technical Group of the European Right. The Italians left the group after claims by the Republikaner that parts of northern Italy should become part of Germany. However, with the Republikaner no longer in the group, we may well see them rejoin, which will take membership of the group up to almost 30. Even if they do not join formally, they will maintain close ties with the group.

In terms of the two big blocs, the Socialist group is relatively coherent and has gained a narrow left majority with the Communists and the left-leaning Greens. The EPP currently stands at 148 and is looking for members to swell its ranks further and bring it closer in size to the Socialists. Who else will join the group is still unclear. Some of the 18 Tory MEPs may well have difficulty joining the EPP, with its avowedly federalist programme, especially in light of recent comments from Mr Major. There are a host of other parties on the Right such as the 'L'Autre Europe' led by Phillippe de Villiers, the neo-Gaullist RPR Party, the Anti-Maastricht movements in Denmark and the Portuguese Conservatives. However, despite the forces of the Right faring better in the elections overall, their lack of coherence will reduce their strength. ■

German Republikaner Party OUT. It only gets 4% of vote so it loses all 6 seats.

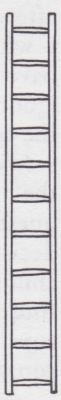
Anti-immigrant **Italian Northern League**'s share of the vote DECREASES. It now has 6 seats; previously it had 8.

Ultra-nationalist **Greek Political Spring Party** IN the European parliament for the first time, winning 2 seats.

Italian National Alliance DOUBLES its share of the vote. It now has 11 seats compared to 4 in 1989. **Forza Italia** IN the European parliament for the first time, with 28 seats, and 33% of the national vote.

Belgian Vlaams Blok INCREASES share of vote from 4 to 7% and now has 2 seats rather than 1.

French National Front MAINTAINS 10 seats, although share of the vote is down from 12 to 10%.



Simon Wood

and other tales

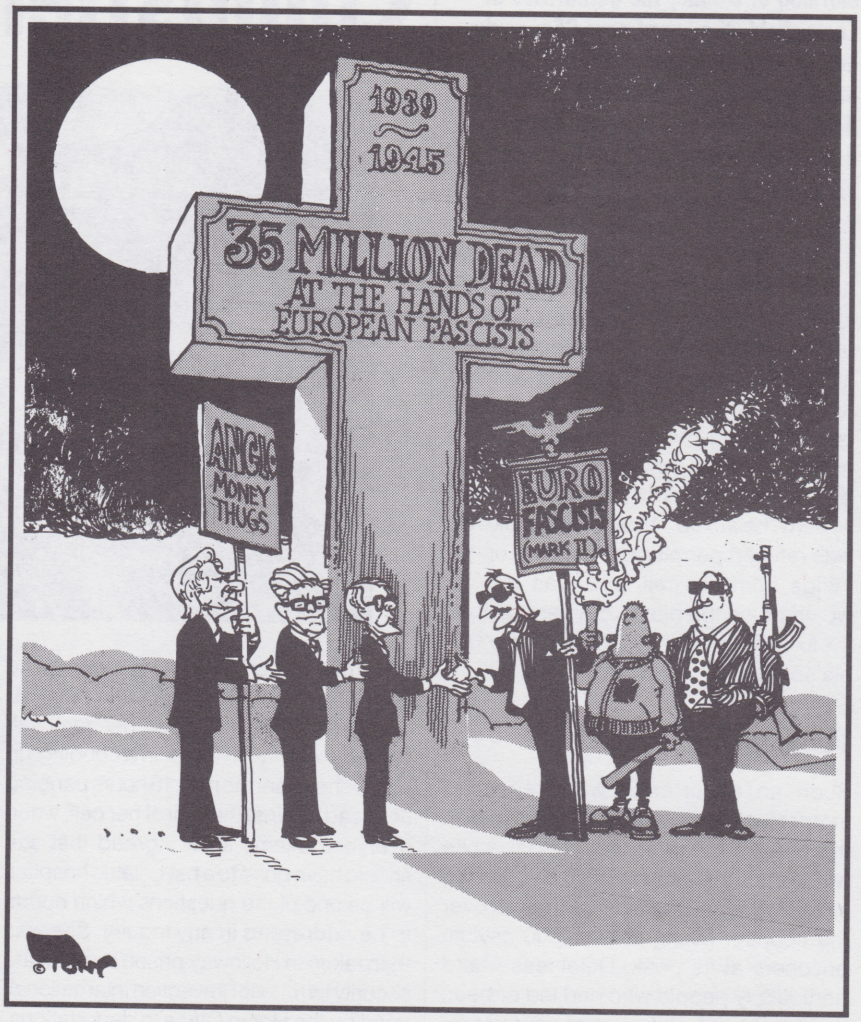
a mine of mercenaries' who can be called upon 'to defend our southern boundaries against any threats coming from the south.'

Mussolini reappraised

Most worrying, however, are the constant attempts to re-evaluate Mussolini and the fascist period, typified not just by Fini's endorsement but by the Northern League's parliamentary speaker, Irene Pivetti ('Mussolini did a lot for women'), and by Berlusconi himself ('the Duce was alright to start with').

In April, state television broadcast a silent film depicting, among other things, how US soldiers and Italian partisans treated captured fascists at the end of the war. Particularly emotive, in the context of the programme, was the footage of the battered bodies of Mussolini and his lover, Clara Petaci, being spat and urinated upon before being strung up. The silent film was followed by a studio discussion in which Giano Accame of the MSI explained how he had joined Mussolini's Blackshirts in 1943 because of the Communist threat.

According to *Il Manifesto*, the studio debate has been accompanied by an orgy of 'post-fascist revisionism' in the press. The main argument is that there is nothing to choose between anti-fascist partisans and fascist 'partisans', between those who resisted the German invasion of the north and those who resisted the Allied invasion of the south.



Equating communism with fascism

This same coupling of fascism with communism is also at the crux of the New Right debate in Germany. In the 1980s New Right intellectuals, anxious to bring themselves 'out of the shadow of Auschwitz', initiated the 'Historians debate', in which the crimes of national socialism were equated with those of socialism.

Many of the intellectuals involved in the 'Historians Debate' are linked to the Republikaner, but this is not exclusively so. Professor Hans Helmuth Knutter, who is based at the political science faculty at Bonn University, is the author of officially approved educational materials produced by a government organisation. Knutter is considered the New Right guru of 'anti-anti-fascism'. He argues that anti-fascists threaten democracy and where there is no anti-fascism, no fascism is possible.

Anti-fascists create fascism!

Such a view might be dismissed as the ramblings of a (K)nutter if it were not for the fact that it is echoed in the present state offensive against the anti-fascist cause.

Across Germany, anti-fascists are being arrested and criminalised. Involvement in an anti-fascist organisation can be enough to be considered a 'terrorist' threat. In Wiesbaden, an anti-fascist spent six months on remand for no other reason than that he was a member of an anti-nationalist and socialist group. In Göttingen, police are considering prosecuting a local Antifa group as a terrorist organisation. A 29-year-old Turkish man was arrested in Berlin, charged with disparaging the German state, and sent to prison for a year after giving out leaflets in Turkish in the wake of the murders at Solingen which accused the German state of collaborating with fascists.

Those who characterise the far Right in Europe as a bunch of bootboys ignore the fact that behind every bootboy lies a 'thinking' thug. And the criminalisation of the anti-fascist cause in Germany shows just how lethal post-fascists can be. ■

Campaigns & Reports

- Campsfield explodes • Joy Gardner
- Deportations • Fascist election round-up
- Miscarriages of justice • Around the courts
- Age tests • Football • South Africa • Reviews

Campsfield explodes

During the night of 5 June and the morning of 6 June, the authorities at Campsfield, the brand new £5m asylum and immigration detention centre outside Oxford, lost control as detainees staged rooftop protests, damaged cells and washbasins and eight escaped. CARF examines the causes and effects of the disturbances.

At about 10 pm on Sunday 5 June, Algerian asylum-seeker Ali Tamarat was taken out of his cell and called in to the office at Campsfield. Ten Home Office and Group 4 Security officers awaited him. He was told, peremptorily, that his last appeal against the refusal of asylum had been turned down and that he was to be taken to Gatwick for removal to Algeria. 'When?' he asked. 'Now,' he was told. He was refused permission to gather up his things from his cell, and was told he would be on the plane to Algeria at 8.30 the following morning – too early to contact his solicitor.

Punishment

Such an occurrence was becoming increasingly common in Campsfield in the months following the hunger strike which started there in March and spread to prisons and detention centres all over the country, taking in over 200 asylum prisoners at its peak. Detainees – and particularly people who had led or been involved in the strike – were summarily removed, or moved to other prisons, with no notice or very short notice either to themselves or to their solicitors. Removals seemed to take place at weekends, when solicitors were unavailable, far too frequently for coincidence. Activists who had been involved in organising the hunger strike and had been released found themselves rearrested for deportation – particularly if, like Ali Tamarat, they allowed themselves to be interviewed about their experiences in detention.

If tension was mounting before the gagging of Elizabeth Blanchard, it went sky-high then. On 24 May, Elizabeth, a 37-year-old psychiatrically disturbed asylum-seeker from Nigeria who had been moved from Harmondsworth to Campsfield after a three-week hunger strike, was handcuffed and allegedly gagged (minister Charles Wardle denies she was gagged, although eye-witnesses swear that her mouth was taped and her head was rolling around) during removal to Banbury police station. Detainees at Campsfield tried to block her removal. Why she was taken there, in a condition in which she spent the next 16 hours banging her head against the wall of her cell, when everyone seems to be agreed that she should have gone to a psychiatric hospital, will be one of the questions which needs to be addressed in any inquiry. She was then taken to Holloway prison by a private security firm, Loss Prevention International, used by the Home Office in deportations. On arrival at Holloway she was so sick that the senior medical officer certified her unfit for detention and she was taken to the Whittington Hospital in north London, where she spent the next 24 hours unconscious.

Some of Charles Wardle's 'motley coalition of left-wing protesters' who demonstrated outside Campsfield on 4 June

Protest

The attempted removal of Ali Tamarat which sparked the disturbances of 5-6 June occurred the day after a large and peaceful demonstration organised by the Campaign to Close Campsfield. This prompted Charles Wardle to go on TV on the evening of 6 June blaming the events on a 'vicious rumour campaign' stirred up by a 'motley coalition of left-wing protesters'. Quite apart from the gross caricature of the many groups from which people concerned about the detention of refugees are drawn – from church to trade union, community and anti-racist groups, all of whom were represented at the 4 June demonstration, it was also an absurd suggestion, that the detainees at Campsfield are led by the nose by British extremists and are incapable of organising around their own grievances – or have none of their own. Given the grim reality of their situation, there would seem to be no need for vicious rumour.

Eye-witnesses have said that the trouble of that night started when one of the men tried to find out what was happening to Ali Tamarat and was knocked out in the process. This seems to have led to the rooftop protest, the use of riot police to quell that, and to injuries, some severe, sustained by rooftop protesters. Some rooftop protesters slashed their chests with cut glass; one man dived off the roof and landed on his head: his whereabouts and condition remain unknown, as do the full extent of the injuries sustained by prisoners. At some point protesters allegedly smashed cell and bathroom furniture worth £20,000. 150-200 Thames Valley police, many in riot gear, fought to 'regain control' for four hours, and in the process witnesses from *Migrant Media* called by the protesters and standing outside the centre heard screaming and saw ambulances taking out more injured than the number officially claimed. Police were seen hitting people with batons all over their bodies. During the confusion, eight detainees escaped, of whom five remain at large. ➡

Charles Wardle was down there the following evening giving interviews in which he vigorously blamed the refugees and their supporters for everything. According to him, they are not refugees but criminals, having come to the country illegally. He claimed that only 600 out of 47,000 asylum-seekers were detained (failing to point out that it was 600 (or 700) at any one time and that a total of around 9,000 immigration prisoners were detained in 1993). And, setting a precedent in sheer cold callousness which took hardened campaigners' breath away, he named Mr Tamarat on TV and gave details of his asylum claim, thus putting his life in danger with the Algerian authorities. (A High Court judge, telephoned late on Tuesday night to try to stop Mr Tamarat's removal the following morning, saw nothing wrong with this, thus winning for himself the collaborators' award for ministerial pet judges for 1994.) Since his removal to Algeria early on 8 June, Mr Tamarat has not been heard of.

Prisoners without rights

In the aftermath of the events of 5-6 June, immigration and Group 4 officials have taken their cue from their hard-line minister. At Campsfield, there were no phone calls and no visits for 48 hours. Detainees were locked up all day on Tuesday, with 15 minutes for meals, during which they were forbidden to speak to each other. A regular visitor to detainees, who had attended the peaceful demonstration on 4 June, was banned by Group 4 staff on the ground that she was a 'threat to good order'. Another ex-detainee, who spoke to the *Guardian* about his experiences, found himself arrested the following day and deported days after that despite his marriage to a British citizen.

The treatment of detainees at Campsfield and the other 'dedicated' detention centre for immigration prisoners, Haslar (near Portsmouth), has prompted one ex-detainee to say that 'at least in other prisons they treat you like a criminal'. Britain's immigration prisoners are giving notice that they will not tolerate being treated without even the rights and protection of ordinary criminal prisoners: the government for its part, by its extraordinarily tough line, is giving notice that it will continue to treat detainees worse than criminals if that is what it takes to deter more asylum-seekers. The battle is joined, and anti-racists must take sides. ■

Campaign to Close Campsfield
c/o 111 Magdalen Road, Oxford.
Tel: (0865) 724452/722357

No more Joy Gardners

It was just one day after the announcement that three police officers were to be prosecuted for manslaughter for their part in the death of Joy Gardner, that Nigerian Kwande Slizba fell to her death from her twelfth floor flat in Islington, north London, during a visit by a bailiff accompanied by police officers. Believing the police to be immigration officers, Kwande attempted to escape from the flat via the balcony, using a washing line which snapped – causing her to fall 150 feet. A Police Complaints Authority investigation is pending on this incident, but what justice can her family expect, given the outcry which accompanied the Joy Gardner announcement, and the whitewash that the trial will surely be? Death is just part of the immigration process for the *Daily Mail*, whose hysterical reporting on the issue is the subject of a complaint by Ms Gardner's solicitors to the Attorney General, while in *Police Review*, Gregory Pipe bemoaned 'how easy it is for ordinary serving officers to be caught up in manslaughter charges if a death occurs following police action'. Oh a policeman's lot is not a happy one!

Politicians didn't hesitate to try and outdo each other to take a 'tough on immigration' stance in the run-up to the May local elections. Home secretary Michael Howard claimed that Labour policies would lead to 'a substantial increase in immigration', while the Home Office carried out a raid on employees of Southwark council whom they suspected of being illegal immigrants. The Labour-controlled council willingly passed over information on their employees for the Home Office to compile a list of those with African-sounding names to be targetted. Seventy people were arrested in the raid and six subsequently deported. Local Lib Dem MP Simon 'no racism in my party' Hughes commented at the time that 'for every illegal immigrant employed by Southwark council, a legitimate local job-seeker is deprived of a job'. ■

Migrant Media

Elizabeth Blanchard

Stop deportations

As we go to press 41-year-old Sunday Ogunwobi has spent over 100 days in sanctuary in Hackney Downs Baptist Church escaping deportation with his wife and three children. Meanwhile, other continuing campaigns against deportations include a 12-hour hunger-strike by campaigners in Birmingham city centre in support of Prakash and Prem Chavrimootoo (see *CARF* no 12). They are living in daily fear of being deported after losing their appeal at the Immigration Appeals Tribunal.

Okolo family defence campaign

Schoolchildren in Hulme, Manchester, are campaigning against the deportation of the Okolo family to Nigeria. St. Philips primary school, which Awele and Anwuli Okolo both attend, has joined the campaign, along with local trade unionists and MPs. Florence Okolo, their mother, came to the UK from Nigeria in 1989 to join her husband, then a student. He has since deserted the family and Florence has been refused permission to stay in Britain with her two daughters. ■

Okolo family defence campaign, c/o St. Philip's primary school, Loxford Street, Hulme, Manchester M15 6BT.

Rahman family appeal

The Rahman family, who have spent the last 18 months speaking across the country at dozens of meetings, conferences and demonstrations, are finally to have their appeal against deportation heard in September. A series of public events is being organised by Manchester campaigners.

SEPTEMBER 6

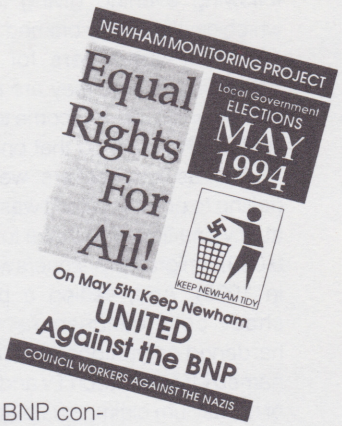
Public meeting: Trade Unionists speak out against deportations, Manchester Town Hall 7.30pm–9.30pm. All night vigil outside immigration appeal court Aldine House, New Bailey Street, Salford 3 from 9.30pm.

SEPTEMBER 7

Mass picket of immigration appeal court. Aldine House 9am–10am. Lunchtime rally outside Aldine House 1pm–2pm. ■

Fascist election round-up

Important lessons for the anti-fascist movement were thrown up by the imaginative campaigns to stop the nazis in their tracks during the May local elections.


NEWHAM MONITORING PROJECT
Equal Rights For All!
Local Government ELECTIONS MAY 1994
KEEP NEWHAM TIDY
On May 5th Keep Newham UNITED Against the BNP
COUNCIL WORKERS AGAINST THE NAZIS

BNP in east London

A 70% turn-out of voters in Tower Hamlets saw the defeat of the BNP and the ruling Liberal Democrats. The turn-out owed a great deal to a loose alliance of community groups and local political activists who worked to encourage voters to throw out BNP councillor Derek Beackon and defeat the BNP. The presence of election observers – a demand of the black community – also helped to prevent the intimidation of black voters which had characterised the BNP success in the September poll.

The BNP stood eight candidates in Tower Hamlets, including three in the Millwall ward where Derek Beackon was elected last September. Although Beackon was defeated, the Millwall candidates – Beackon, Gordon Callow and Alan Smith – received 5,500 votes. The fascists also stood three candidates in the Holy Trinity ward where they received over 2,000 votes, showing that the nazis are still a threat and that much work remains to be done in the area.

In neighbouring Newham, which was a National Front stronghold in the 1970s, the BNP had five candidates, while four official Conservative party candidates, standing as Conservatives Against Labour's Unfair Ethnic Policies (CALUEP), ran an ugly, racist campaign. The BNP did disturbingly well here, with its candidates taking 17% of the vote in the Beckton ward and only slightly less in Custom House and Silvertown. If the racist vote of the Tories and the BNP were combined, then the Labour party would have lost control of these wards.

But the situation could have been far worse if it had not been for a campaign organised jointly by the Newham Monitoring Project and Council Workers Against the Nazis. Recognising the populist nature of the BNP's message – that black people were taking all the decent housing and the Labour authority was pro-black and anti-white – campaigners leafleted every house in the borough, countering these myths and putting forward their own message of 'equal rights for all'. Newham Monitoring Project concludes: 'If we are to reverse the balance of forces where socialist ideas are in a minority, and where anti-fascist memories of the Second World War mean nothing to young people, then we have to go beyond sloganistic approaches or the waving of lollipops, to develop a strategy encapsulating the message of "equal rights for all".'

With party fuhrer, John Tyndall, managing to hold on to a BNP deposit for the first time in the parliamentary by-election in Dagenham, that message – and the campaigning strategies that grow out of it – is more important now than ever. Tyndall's campaign was greatly assisted by a huge police presence that restricted opposition to his campaign and enabled him to receive 1,511 votes (7%).

Combining the racist vote: Newham nazi Steven O'Connell with CALUEP's Valerie Fursland at the election count in Newham

Feuding, fighting and other skullduggery

Another facet of the election campaign that benefitted the anti-fascist cause was the ongoing bloody feud between the BNP and Combat 18, that has led to several BNP members being hospitalised (including Tony Lecomber and Michael Newland), and a letter bomb being sent to the BNP's Bexley headquarters.

Other London BNP candidates stood in Greenwich, where its candidate, William Hitches, was accused of hitting a rival candidate. In Sutton, BNP candidate Jenny Oliver was accused of breaking electoral law by falsifying her nominees. And in Hillingdon and Hounslow, the BNP candidate, Warren Glass, was well-known to anti-racists. He had previously been cleared of taking part in a BNP attack on a meeting when he told the court that he wasn't associated with the party. None of these candidates received a vote of any significance.

Outside London, the BNP concentrated on the north, with three candidates standing in Rochdale; one of them, Janet Appleyard, married to C18 member Dave, received nearly 6% of the vote. Rochdale was subjected to several attacks from nazi skinheads during the election campaign. In Hertfordshire, organiser David Bruce took 10% of the vote in the Rosedale ward.

National Front, Third Way, and other has-beens

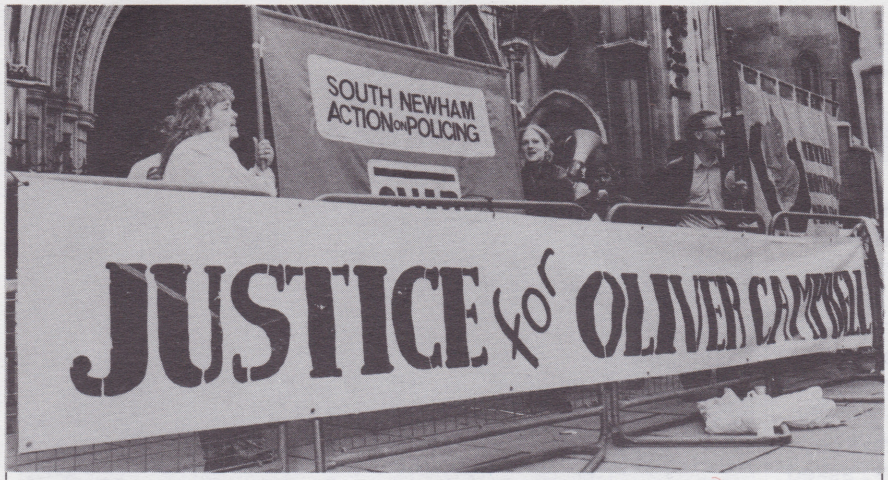
The National Front, whose dwindling fortunes were recently boosted by a £100,000 donation, concentrated its local election campaign on the Midlands, where it stood 11 candidates. In Dudley, John Stokes, got 10% of the vote; in Sandwell, where the NF received over 16% in a council by-election last November, two of its candidates received 9%.

Apart from the Midlands, the NF has been steadily losing support to the BNP. Elsewhere, one candidate stood in London (Lewisham), and two in the South (Exeter); none of them received above 8% of the vote. A former NF member, Barry Olley, stood for the Conservative party in Lewisham's Hither Green ward.

The NF also stood five candidates in the European elections in June; two in London (West and South-East), one in Hertfordshire, Staffordshire East and Birmingham West. Only Andrew Carmichael, the candidate for Birmingham West, got above 2%.

The Third Way stood four candidates in London and one in Hertfordshire in the local elections. As was the case with its European election candidate (in London East), it received an insignificant vote.

The notorious nazi, Tony Malski, who stood as an independent in the local election at Hertfordshire, St. Albans, received an alarming 19% of the vote after the Conservative Party failed to register a candidate. ■



Darren Jakobsen

Oliver Campbell appeal

After a delay of over 18 months, the Court of Appeal has finally heard Oliver Campbell's appeal against conviction. Oliver was sentenced to life imprisonment in 1991 for the shooting of a Hackney shopkeeper, a crime which he vehemently denies. His conviction was largely based on confessions which were made without the presence of a solicitor, and upon a British Knights baseball cap found at the scene of the murder similar to one that Oliver possessed (although there was no forensic evidence to prove that the hat was his).

At the appeal hearing a psychologist's report was presented which concluded that Oliver's 'social function' (ie, his overall vulnerability and ability to deal with the pressures of police questioning) was that of a 10-year-old. The Justice for Oliver Campbell Campaign argues that Oliver's severe mental and learning disability casts serious doubts upon the reliability of his confessions, which were later withdrawn when he had proper legal representation. Other defence evidence, that Eric Samuels, Oliver's co-defendant, had repeatedly asserted Oliver's innocence to other prisoners, was ruled inadmissible.

As CARF went to press, judgment on Oliver's appeal was still awaited. ■

Justice for Oliver Campbell Campaign, PO Box 273, London E7. Tel: (081) 552 6284.

Colly Wilson is innocent

In February 1992 two men tried to rob a newsagent in St. Anns, Nottingham – Colly Wilson was sentenced to ten years for that robbery. The newsagent described his attackers as white, over 6 feet tall and in their mid-twenties. Colly is 5 feet 7 inches, 37 years old and black.

Colly was convicted because the police forced a confession out of him. By the time he confessed he had been in police custody for over 45 hours. In that time he had a total of 6 hours sleep, and had spent part of both the preceding nights being transported from one police station to another.

A psychiatrist's report found that Colly suffers from a paranoid personality disorder, and was liable to make a false confession to satisfy those he saw as a threat. Despite this, the judge allowed the confession to be used as evidence. Even the getaway driver stated that Colly was not involved, yet he was still convicted. ■

You can write to Colly Wilson, JJ3012, HMP Gartree, Leicester Road, Market Harborough, Leics, LE16 7RP. Colly is being supported by *Conviction*, which helps framed prisoners to clear their names. *Conviction*, PO Box 522, Sheffield S1 3FF (Newsletter £5/£3 for 4 issues).

Freedom for Prem and Sam

Congratulations to Sam Kulasingham and Prem Sivalingham on their fight against injustice which resulted in the quashing of their conviction for murder by the Court of Appeal in May. The court heard that not only had the men been beaten by police during the investigation but that evidence of prosecution witnesses, also Tamils, was obtained by threats of deportation and promises of help in sorting out their immigration status. When their convictions were quashed as unsafe, Prem and Sam were released, only to be immediately redetained by over-zealous immigration officials.

Prem was seen in early June on a picket for the Bridgwater Four. He testified to the solidarity and support shown by the families of other victims of miscarriages of justice and told CARF: 'We were given such support and help when we were inside. It hurt me to leave behind innocent people when I left prison. We have a duty to help those still there.' ■

Justice for Marlon Thomas

Campaigners in Bristol are appealing for funds to help the family of 18-year-old student Marlon Thomas and several other black youths, who were savagely beaten in a racist attack at a local funfair in March. Many of the youths were hospitalised, and three months after the attack Marlon is still critically ill, although he has been moved from intensive care. Five fairground workers from 'Bob Wilson's fair' have so far been charged – three with attempted murder and two with grievous bodily harm. Marlon's family have been successful in demanding that Bristol City Council refuse permission for the fair to return while the case is pending, and will pressurise neighbouring local authorities to do likewise.

Justice for Marlon Thomas Campaign, c/o 6 York Court, Wilder Street Bristol BS2 8QQ. (Cheques payable to Marlon Thomas Support Fund.)

Kick racism out of football

A National Football Fans Day of Action Against Racism is due to take place on 20 August, the first day of the new season (see CARF no 20). The ongoing campaign of football fans will kick off with the distribution of a free fanzine – produced by football fans themselves with support from the Professional Footballers Association – at virtually every ground in England and Scotland. Football fans working on the magazine, which will focus on the positive anti-racist trends in football, told CARF: 'This is an initiative aimed at genuine fans, to encourage them to take action at grounds. This is not an initiative for outside groups to take advantage of.'

If you would like to be involved in the distribution of the fanzine contact: Tim Crabbe,c/o Football Supporters Association, PO Box 11, Liverpool L26 1XP.

Free Satpal Campaign

Free Satpal Ram

Satpal Ram came one step closer to freedom on 19 May when he won his application for judicial review at the High Court in London. One hundred protesters from London, Birmingham and Bradford gathered outside the court in the Strand to show support for Satpal, who has served eight years of a life sentence for murder after defending himself against a racist gang who attacked him in an Indian restaurant in Birmingham. Satpal's case will now go to judicial review in order to win his right to appeal.

Contact the Free Satpal Campaign, 101 Villa Road, Birmingham B19 or CARF for further details.

Around the courts

Brixton police recently shot themselves in the foot when they arrested two young men half an hour after a street robbery. Asked why they stopped the men in a densely populated area of London half a mile away from the incident, one officer said it was because they fitted the description of the robbers given by the victim. Not so, according to the victim, who had already seen and eliminated the suspects. 'Couldn't be because they were black, could it officer?', asked the defence. 'That's outrageous', PC Plod replied, throwing down his file onto the witness box in disgust. The next officer suffered the same question. He suggested the men ran when they saw the police car approach. Asked why they should run when the victim had eliminated them and they clearly weren't the robbers, he replied; 'Oh we didn't know they had been eliminated at that stage'. 'Yes officer but they knew they weren't the robbers didn't they?'. A loud '...Oooh errr', was heard as the two men left the dock with characters intact.

Appeal of the East

Listening to an appeal against refusal of a visa to a spouse. This time, however, the husband is a white Briton, furious at the temerity of the civil servants who refused to let his new wife accompany him back to Britain after his two-week holiday in Sri Lanka. Asked about the course of their short relationship and why he married her, the angry husband said, 'They're so gentle and submissive, aren't they?' 'They?' 'These eastern women. I've spent time in India. I decided I couldn't do better for a wife.'

Western men have long held the fantasy of eastern women as both exotically beautiful and submissive. But for today's western men, it is a fantasy that can be acted out. The world is a supermarket, the Third World a place for the fulfilment of fantasy, and the obvious result is going to be men zooming round the world to pick off-the-shelf marriage or sex partners. The immigration rules reinforce the women's dependency: if they are allowed in to the country it is on probation, and should their husbands tire of them before their year's probationary period is over, they forfeit their right to stay.

In this case, the wife was refused permission to come with her husband. Having married him in a whirlwind of imported romance, she is now stranded, barred from joining her husband in Britain, unmarriageable at home.

With the help of CARF, local anti-racist groups and poet Benjamin Zephaniah, community photographers from east London are preparing a unique exhibition on

Racism and Resistance in Tower Hamlets.

Ideal for display in schools, colleges and libraries
For details ring Darren on 0836 565059

Wayne Bellamy

300 anti-racists rallied in Poplar park in June to protest at the latest racist attack in Tower Hamlets. Mohammed Ruhul Alam underwent six hours of intensive surgery following a stabbing by ten white youths. The protest was addressed by the Tower Hamlets Nine campaign and the family of Quddus Ali.

Obituaries

Bob Smith It was with sadness that CARF learnt of the sudden death of Bob Smith in April. As a member of *Socialist Outlook* and of Birmingham CARF, Bob was a stalwart of both the local trade union movement and anti-racist campaigns in Birmingham for many years. He played a key role in many struggles – from local campaigns against deportations to, most recently, the year-long fight of black workers for unionisation at the Burnsall factory in Smethwick. Our movement is poorer without him.

Bob's comrades in *Socialist Outlook* have established a memorial fund in his name, c/o PO Box 1109, London N4 2UU.

Gulen Kutluay, who died on 1 March after a long illness, is missed by all who knew her struggle for social justice. Forced to flee from Turkey after the September 1980 military coup, she dedicated her time in Britain to helping to organise Turkish and Kurdish workers. She helped to set up the Halkevi Community Centre in Hackney, east London, and built up the Union of Turkish workers. The Trade Union Support unit in Hackney was among those who commemorated her life's work at her funeral, attended by over 700 people.

Age-testing: the abuse of medical science

In May an incident involving an asylum-seeker gave particular cause for concern. A young, unaccompanied refugee arrived in Britain from Africa via France. He claimed political asylum and said that he was 15 and that his aunt was here. As a 15-year-old, he would have been entitled to stay here to have his asylum claim decided. But the Home Office claimed that he was not 15 but 18 and, as an adult, had to be sent back to France to have his asylum claim decided. The basis on which they had concluded that he was three years older than his claimed age was a medical examination, which included examination of his pubic hair.

The use of so-called medical expert evidence for age-testing of immigrants calls attention to the dubious and often humiliating methods used in immigration control. The worst example of this abuse of so-called science was the practice of 'virginity testing' whereby young women coming to the UK from the Indian sub-continent for marriage were medically examined on arrival at the airport. The practice was steadfastly fought by the Asian community until it was abolished in the late 1970s.

In the 1970s, the use of X-rays to determine the 'bone age' of immigrant children from the Indian sub-continent was widespread. It was justified on the basis that many of the 'children' were over age, but the government's claims that X-rays provided an accurate and acceptably safe way of estimating age were conclusively discredited in 1981, when an independent report showed that they were not only utterly unreliable but also caused cancer. Age-testing X-rays were withdrawn soon after publication of the report.

No more reliable, accurate or safe way of estimating age has been found in the decade since the abandonment of bone X-rays. But the lack of a test has not, apparently, led to an influx of large numbers of adults pretending to be children.

REVIEW

The face of Fu Manchu

Sometime in 1912, Sax Rohmer, freelance journalist-cum-music hall critic, became the mother and father of Fu Manchu and set his creation amongst the sex, drugs and crime in a series of short 'C' grade detective stories. Never having travelled to the Far East, Rohmer contorted his meagre and backward knowledge of the London Limehouse-based Chinese community to provide the semblance of informed opinion. His stories were later garbled by radio, newspapers, film and television which propagated and developed the character further.

The character of Fu Manchu occupies only a small portion of Jenny Clegg's book, and in this respect we are served well, because the real face of Fu Manchu is that of the British government. We are shown the core tenets of British policy towards the Far East past and present and how these have changed in response to shifts in China and at home. If we wish to understand the early success of drug barons, we need look no further than the British government's insistence that its men of commerce supply opium to the Chinese people and provide gun boats to enforce its will. With the defeat of the Taiping Rebellion in the 19th Century came famine and destitution on a huge scale, forcing many Chinese to leave the country. The current mess surrounding the sovereignty of Hong Kong and the (non)citizenship rights of its population is a direct result of the events this book describes.

Clegg's book is very informative and is structured for use as a teaching aid in schools, with worksheets and questions for class use. Its scope is broad but brief and this part of colonial history receives, for the first time, the attention it undoubtedly deserves. ■

Fu Manchu and the 'Yellow Peril: the making of a racist myth, by Jenny Clegg, Trentham Books, £9.95.

WORLD DICTATORSHIP
Cruel, insidious, treacherous, Dr. Fu Manchu is ruthless in his mad scheme to rule the world.
MYSTERY
THRILLS
SUSPENSE
DRUMS OF FU MANCHU
Suggested by stories by
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South Africa – free at last

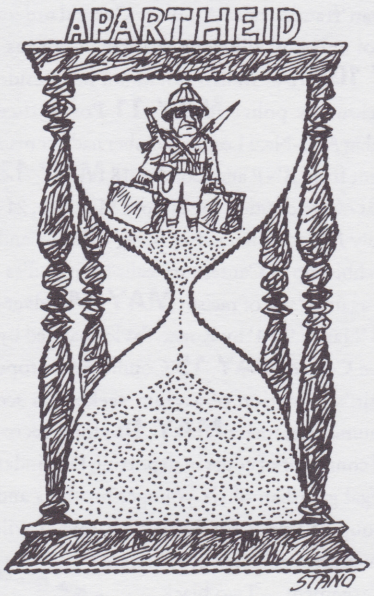
To mark the inauguration of Nelson Mandela as South African president, CARF talked to Fatima Meer, a long-standing member of the African National Congress and author of *Higher than hope*, a biography of Mandela.

CARF: *When you were interviewing Nelson Mandela in prison for the biography, did you ever believe you would witness his inauguration as president?*

Fatima Meer: Yes, I did. There were all the signs that he was being treated as the potential and next President. His 'prison' was most un-prisonlike, and he was allowed to see practically whoever he wanted to. Negotiations actually began at Victor Verster Prison.

CARF: *The Western media makes much of the fact that 'Indians' and 'Coloureds' voted with the National Party, but surely the ANC has also had a lot of support from within these groups?*

FM: I do not know on what basis the media concludes Indians and Coloureds did not support the ANC. Indians and Coloureds are concentrated in two regions in KwaZulu/Natal and the Western Cape respectively. In the Western Cape, Coloureds constituted 53% of the potential voters, whites about 24% and Africans only 18.5%. The ANC polled 33% of the votes, and could not have done so without at least 30% of Coloureds voting for them. Certainly the Nationalists' win at 53% was contributed to substantially by the Coloureds, but it was significantly due to white voters who overwhelmingly voted for the National Party.



The Nationalists won only 11% of the total votes cast in KwaZulu/Natal. Their support came predominantly from white voters, 90-95% of whom, it could safely be assumed, voted for them. If the Indians had given the National Party substantial support, its showing would have been far better.

CARF: *What do you see as the immediate problems ahead for South Africa?*

FM: One of the biggest immediate problems will be making good the promises made with regard to housing, jobs and education. The people's joy is great at the outcome of the elections, but so too are their expectations. The ANC-dominated government will have to be very adroit in keeping the balance between public expenditure, taxation and borrowing, so as to keep the economy afloat.

CARF: *What of the call by the Nazis and nationalists for a white homeland? Are they completely marginalised now, or is their fight going to be in any way realistic? And would Inkatha's position strengthen their hand?*

FM: My guess is that the call for a white homeland is going to grow fainter and, in the course of a year or so, disappear altogether. While the ANC has pledged to ameliorate poverty which is so overwhelmingly black, it has also pledged to protect minority rights, which, in the main, means protecting white interests. In the short term, it is going to be far easier to fulfil the latter pledge than the former, and that in itself will erode remaining support for a white homeland.

Inkatha will go along happily with the ANC policy, particularly since it has KwaZulu/Natal. There is really very little difference between the aspirations of the two parties. The conflict has been over power and this appears to be easing. Inkatha's main thrust was for a federal structure, and it has practically got that. What now gets in the way are personal egos, but Mandela's diplomacy and generosity appears to be winning even there.

CARF: *Is there a danger of a Third Force – a fascist force – emerging from disgruntled Afrikaner elements in the police and army?*

FM: No, I don't see much danger of a third force. The sunset clause in ANC policy protects the white civil service, and about one-third of the white population remains employed there. The police and army are going to find very few changes in their conditions of employment, apart from the fact that they will have to be weaned away from their traditional hostility to blacks. ■

1994 CALENDAR

RACE RESISTANCE

APR 25 Gravestones in a Jewish cemetery in Hull are daubed with fascist slogans **APR 26** Former trainee policewoman tells industrial tribunal of harassment by other officers because she refused to improve her arrest record by stopping more black people **APR 27** Seventy arrests made in immigration swoop of Southwark council employees **APR 30** Hundreds march through Manchester to remember victims of racist violence in the city – May Day demonstrations against racism and fascism also take place in Nottingham and Sheffield **MAY 3** Australia refuses entry to Holocaust revisionist David Irving, because he does not meet legal standards of 'good character' **MAY 5** BNP loses Tower Hamlets council seat in local elections but gains high votes across east London **MAY 6** Black detective Barry Thompson is awarded 'significant' compensation and apology for racial abuse and discrimination suffered during training course **MAY 7** Nazi Cath Murphy quits job as a DSS officer in Coventry after unions threaten industrial action if forced to work with her **MAY 8** Chemist Dr Iqbal Khan, who alleged racial discrimination, wins promotion and £15,000 damages on condition that company's name not disclosed **MAY 9** Tory Lady Olga Maitland urges immediate deportation of Nigerian 'fraudsters'... Attorney General orders review of inquest jury's verdict of unlawful killing on death in police custody of Leon Patterson **MAY 10** Fire at Indian restaurant in Deeside (near Chester) treated as malicious by police **MAY 11** Post Office pressed to investigate allegations that Anti-Nazi League member had her mail intercepted resulting in harassment from BNP and Combat 18 **MAY 12** High Court lifts immediate threat of deportation for Harold Martinez, 21-year-old Colombian whose family fled to Britain after being tortured and threatened by drug barons... Archbishop of Canterbury calls for mobilisation of European church leaders against 'sin' of racism **MAY 14** Advertising for anti-fascist pop record 'Nazi's 1994' by Roger Taylor banned by Broadcast Advertising Clearance Centre **MAY 15** Council of Europe begins investigation into Britain's detention of asylum-seekers to see whether practice amounts to inhuman treatment **MAY 16** Home secretary Michael Howard cleared of contempt of court in deporting Dalvinder Kaur in spite of her status as legal guardian of six younger brothers and sisters **MAY 18** Socialist group of European Parliament says it will refuse to cooperate with fascist members of Italian government when they visit the European Parliament... Two black football players are taken off field when they become targets for racists during pitch invasion at Millwall-Derby game **MAY 21** Bexley council, under new control of Labour and Lib Dems, declares it will renew attempts to close down BNP headquarters in Welling... Two African-Caribbean teenagers beaten by gang of rampaging youths with baseball bats in shopping street in broad daylight in Bexleyheath **MAY 22** Asian cab driver in Bradford faces loss of sight in one eye after being shot with air rifle **MAY 23** Twelve-year-old boy charged with threatening to firebomb home of Asian family in Derby who have boarded up their windows because of harassment **MAY 24** Home secretary announces changes to immigration rules to allow people to settle in Britain if they invest at least £750,000 **MAY 25** Michael Burns, who told police 'I am a racist', jailed for seven years after Leicester crown court hears how he attacked and robbed three Asian minicab drivers in three hours last December **MAY 26** Home secretary Michael Howard claims that Labour policies will lead to 'very substantial increase in immigration' **MAY 27** Two lecturers at North-West London college disciplined for displaying Anti-Nazi League literature in staff common room **MAY 28** High Court rules that mixed-race family who endured ten years of racist abuse from local residents not entitled to compensation from Havering Council who refused to rehouse them **MAY 29** Study by Prison Reform Trust reports that Africans and African-Caribbeans make up 17 per cent of Britain's remand prisoners **MAY 30** Nine members of Asian family escape with minor burns after arson attack on their Rochdale home **MAY 31** Post Office workers in Derby refuse to deliver National Front election literature – NF agent Andy Carmichael says he will press for their dismissal **JUN 1** Seventeen-year-old Ruhul Alam undergoes six hours of intensive surgery after he is stabbed in Poplar, east London by gang of ten white youths... Ten-year-old Nathan Brady turned away from an audition for the Milky Bar Kid after manufacturers Nestlé say they will not cast a black or Asian child in the part **JUN 2** Report from the EOC says that discrimination causes ethnic minority women to have two-and-a-half times unemployment rate of white women **JUN 3** CRE investigation reveals that car hire firm charged black customers double the deposit of white customers **JUN 6** Two elderly brothers and their sister convicted of threatening behaviour after hurling anti-Semitic abuse at their neighbour Daniel Israel and spitting at him **JUN 7** Irish jokes officially declared racist by a tribunal awarding Trevor McAuley £5,900 damages after he was sacked for complaining about anti-Irish jokes... Brian Hunter, 18, sentenced to 21 months in young offenders institution for waging campaign of hate against Liaquat Ali and threatening to burn down his shop in Newcastle **JUN 9** BNP leader John Tyndall gains 1,511 votes (7 per cent) in parliamentary by-election in Dagenham, east London... Three BNP members, including national organiser Richard Edmonds, are found guilty of savage racist attack in east London last year **JUN 12** Home Office announces new measures to prosecute those who employ or harbour 'illegal immigrants' **JUN 17** Black south-Londoner Herold Douglas is held by police for 24 hours on suspicion of being a drug smuggler after he went into a police station to report the theft of his wallet **JUN 20** European ministers initiate computerised fingerprint recongition system to exchange information on 'refugees, illegal immigrants and other unwanted aliens'... Three men are jailed for up to five years after being convicted of attack on Kenneth Harris who they ran over with his car in Ilford last September **JUN 21** Three police officers charged with the manslaughter of Joy Gardner are remanded on bail... Report claims that British nazis will join international computer networks to spread their material **JUN 22** Trial begins of 2 police officers charged with perverting the course of justice in the investigation into the death of Pc Blakelock for which the 'Tottenham three' were falsely convicted

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